

THE ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

ELEMENTS OF DESIGN ARE THE TOOLS WE USE AS ARTISTS AND THE PRINCIPLES ARE WHAT WE DO WITH THEM



ELEMENTS

- LINE
- SHAPE
- FORM
- VALUE
- COLOR
- SPACE
- TEXTURE

PART ONE
THE ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

LINE

STRUCTURAL, OUTLINE, CONTOUR, GESTURE,
SKETCH, IMPLIED, LINE OF SIGHT, HORIZONTAL,
DIAGONAL, VERTICAL

Structural Lines are the lines that hold a design together. Structural lines come in a variety of types with different qualities and characteristics. They can be delicate and thin like a spider's web or thick and bold like a row of telephone lines.



Can you see where the structural lines are in this photograph?



Can you see how the use of these lines in this landscape painting add to the suggestion of perspective? How would this work appear without these lines?

Outlines are the edges of an object. An object drawn in outline seems flat and is usually the same thickness. An outline shape suggests the outer line only



Contour Lines – describe the shape of an object, and include interior detail.



Contour drawing is a slow and intricate process which is meant to record detail rather than perfect form.

Gesture Lines – Gesture lines are lines that suggest movement and emphasize direction



Gesture drawing is meant to be fast and not as concerned with detail as contour drawing. Gesture drawing captures the essence of the object being drawn and is mostly used for a subject which is dynamic and moving.

Sketch lines are used to depict detail. Sketching is seen as an information gathering activity for a painting or design. Sketches usually have more detail than a contour or gesture drawing.



Implied Line – An implied line suggests that a line is present without it being drawn or incorporated into the artwork. The use of implied lines is often seen in perspective drawings.



Line of sight – A line of sight is established as an implied line between a figure's focal point and an object. In this painting, there is a direct line of sight between the woman in the field and the house. This causes the viewer to follow the subject's gaze to turn their attention to the house as the focal point.

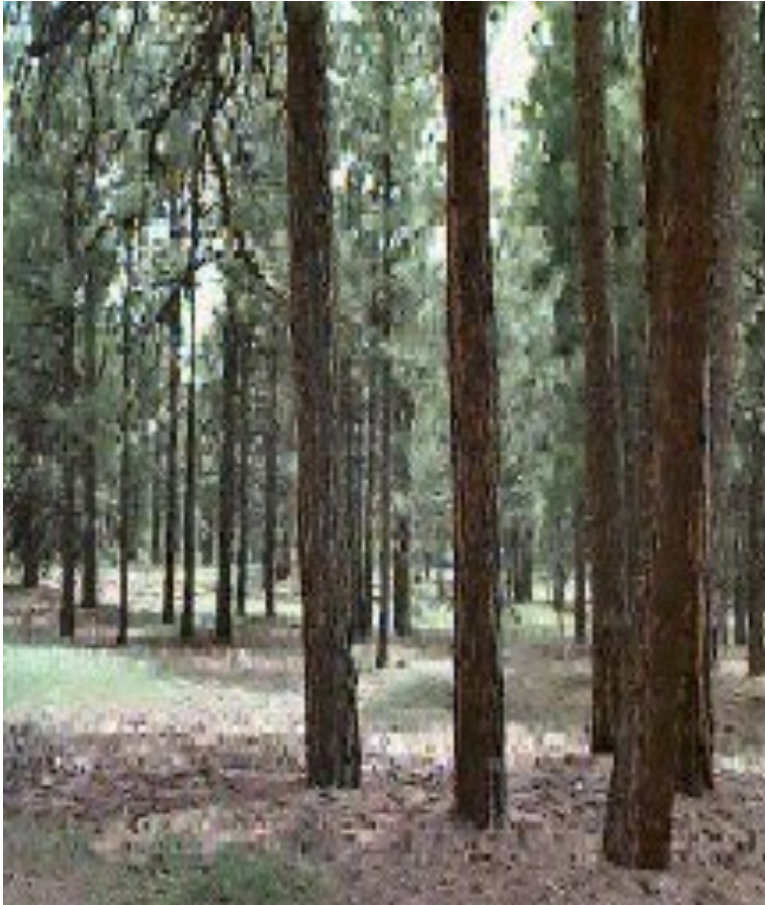


Horizontal Lines - ocean, horizon, calm, resting, balance.



Note that these photographs focus on the horizon, with added vertical lines for balance. The position of the vertical line is always off centered to the left.

Vertical Lines – Height, stability,
dignity, structure.



Diagonal Lines – movement, dynamic, energy, action.



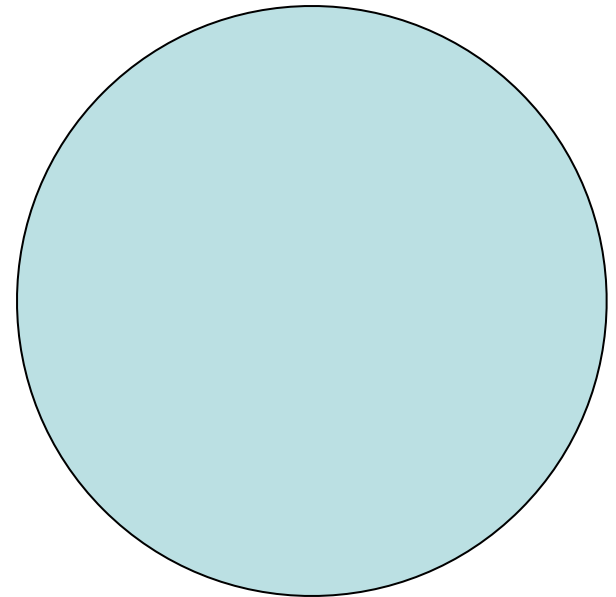
SHAPE AND FORM

SHAPE, FORM, GEOMETRIC, ORGANIC, STATIC, DYNAMIC,
CURVED, ANGULAR, POSITIVE, NEGATIVE.

Shape and Form

- A **shape** is two dimensional, it has height and width but has no depth. We can easily identify the shape of most objects without having extra visual information.
- A **form** is a three dimensional object. It has three dimensions - height, width and depth. Forms usually have weight and solidity. Sometimes they have a continuous surface like a ball or many surfaces like a box.

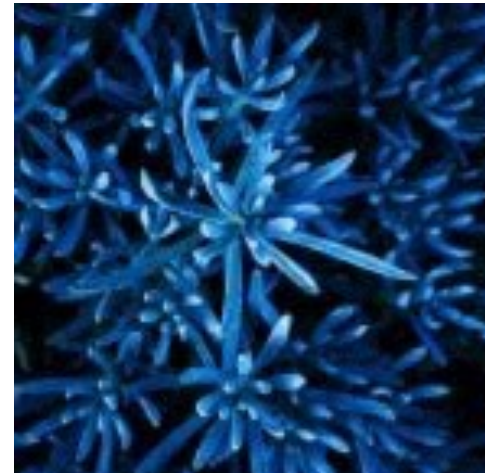
Which is which?



A **geometric** shape/form is sharp, perfect in its dimensions and precise. Geometric shapes are usually man – made and have predominantly straight lines. Some natural objects can be geometric, such as an orange or honey comb.



An **organic** shape/form has rounded and soft edges and is a free flowing. Most organic forms are derived from natural objects and occur in nature.



Shapes and forms can have curved and angular lines and be both organic or geometric



We react to some shapes because they are symbolic: they suggest or represent meaning. **Symbolic shapes** have an important role in communicating ideas in everyday life as well as art. Every culture has shapes to convey certain meanings. Shapes are often used to represent cultural or national identity.



The indigenous people of Australia's central and western desert have a long tradition of using **symbolic shapes** to communicate ideas since the late 1970's the symbolic language of Indigenous Australians has become more familiar to others as Aboriginal paintings have reached a wider audience.



Shapes can also be **dynamic or static**. Dynamic shapes describe movement, activity while static shapes can appear still and composed

Dynamic



Static



VALUE (TONE)

TONE, CONTRAST, HIGH KEY, LOW KEY, TINT,
SHADE, CHIAROSCURO,

Tone refers to the lightness or darkness of a material or color. This Andy Warhol painting represents a strong tonal **contrast** because both extreme lightness and darkness are used



Strong **tonal contrast** can be used to create a dramatic effect.



A painting using mainly lighter colors is called a **high key** color scheme. A painting which uses mainly darker colors is called a **low key** color scheme. *Evening, Pipestone Pass (1949)*(below) is an example of what color scheme?



The use of **low key colors** creates a subtle, soft effect in this William Turner painting.



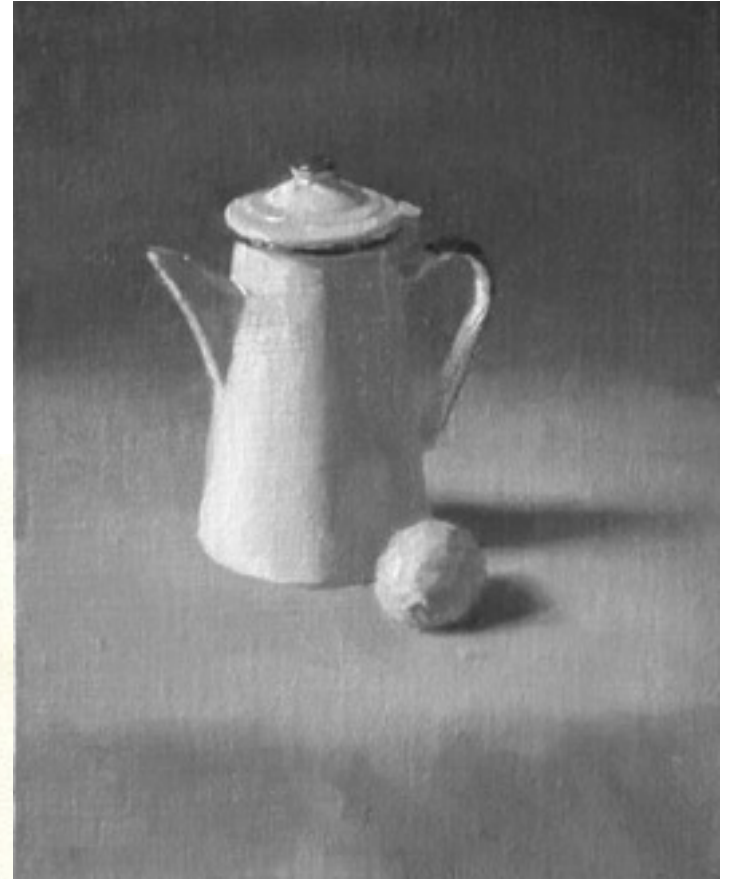
The tonal value of the color used in painting is controlled by the addition of black and white. White added to a color to lighten it is called a **tint**, black added to a color is called a **shade**. In this tint/shade color wheel the tints are visible towards the centre of the circle, the shades are around the outside and the original colors are the dots around the edge.



Chiaroscuro is an Italian term for 'light - dark'. It refers to the balance between light and shade, used to make forms look three dimensional.



Shading is used to replicate lightness and darkness and suggest that an object has form. Light can be replicated several different ways. Tone can be darkened in a painting by adding black. In a drawing, tone can be darkened by applying pressure to the pencil or changing to a darker medium.



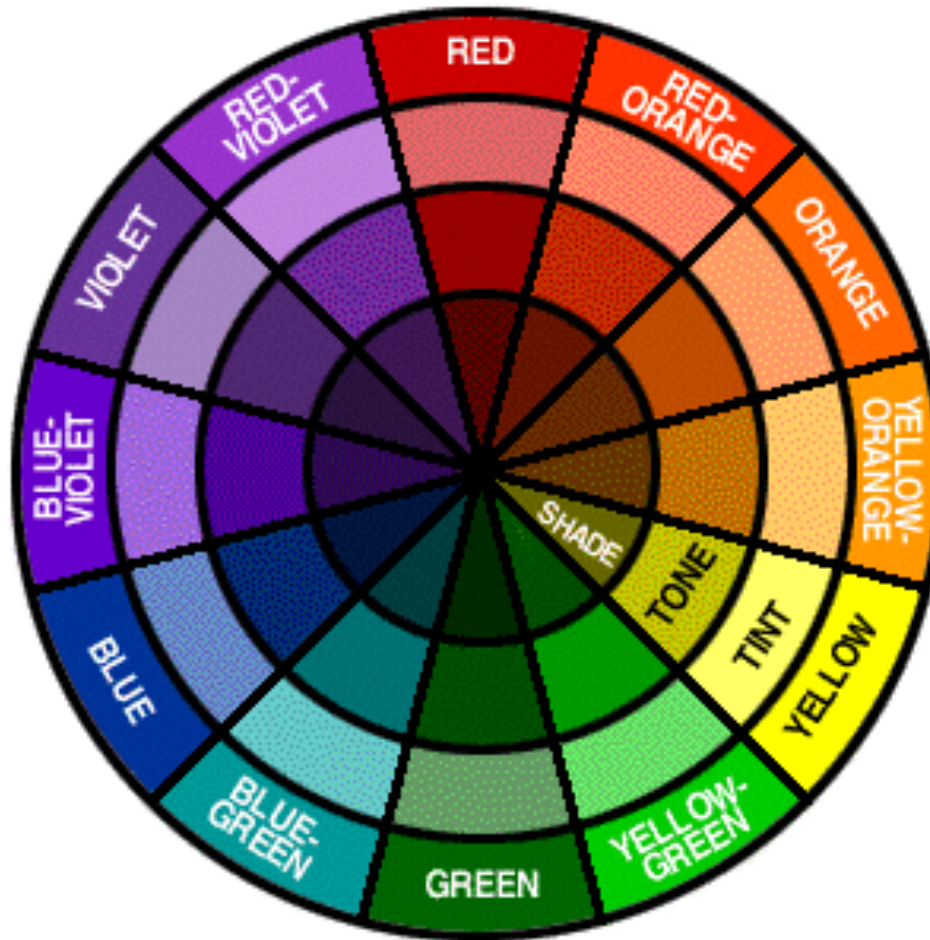
COLOR

COLOR WHEEL, PRIMARY, SECONDARY, COMPLIMENTARY, ANALOGOUS,
MONOCHROMATIC, COOL, WARM, INTENSITY, SPECTRUM,
VALUE, HUE, NEUTRAL.

A **color wheel** is a circle divided into at least six sections and containing the three **primary** and three **secondary** colors.

Primary Colors

Red
Blue
Yellow



Secondary Colors

Purple
Orange
Green

Made by
mixing the
primaries.

Complimentary colors are opposite each other on the color wheel. When used together within an artwork they make each other seem brighter and more dynamic. In Van Gogh's painting 'The Night Café' the use of green and red next to each other creates a dynamic atmosphere.



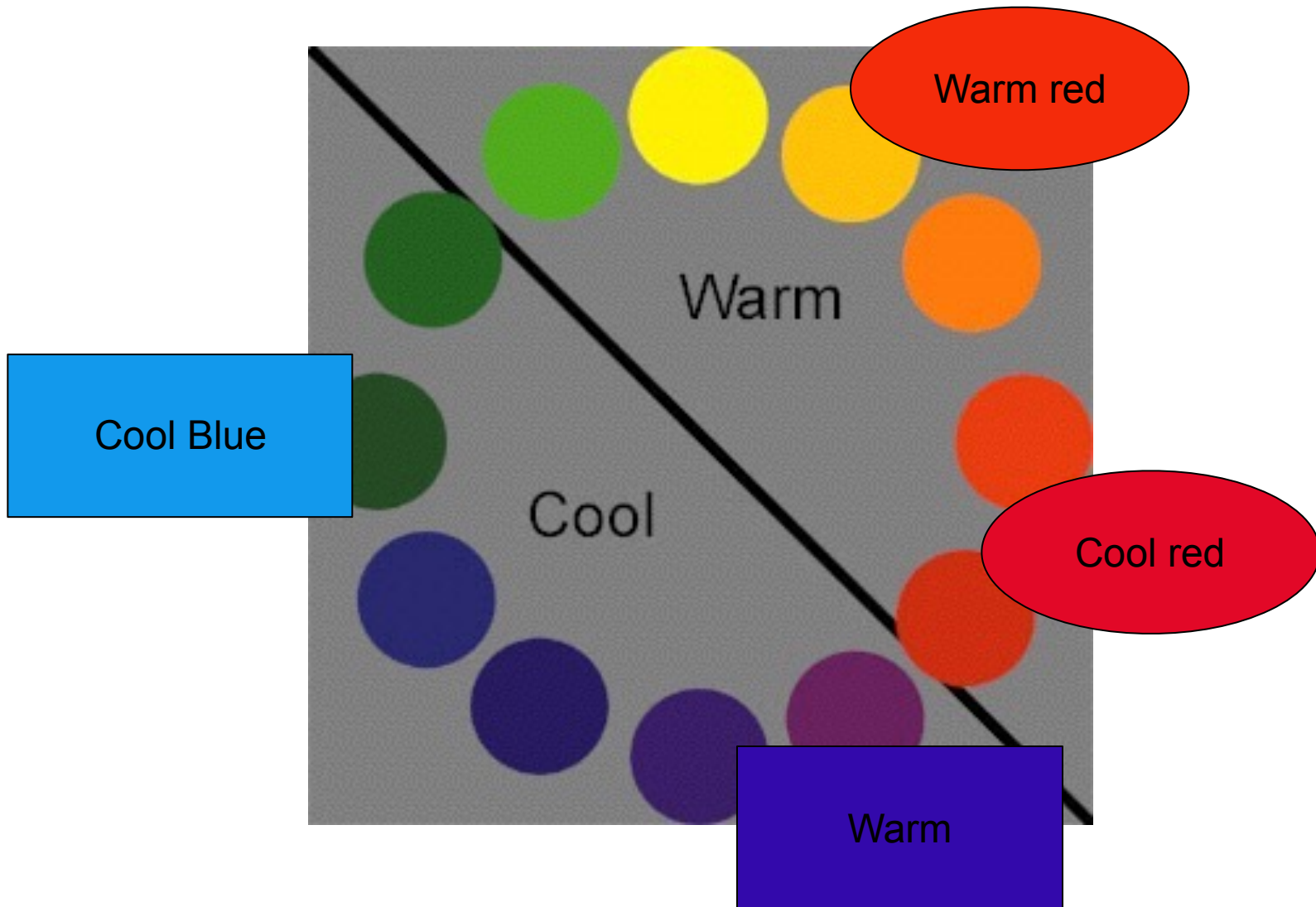
Analogous colors are colors which are near each other on the color wheel. When used together they create a sense of harmony.



A **Monochromatic** color scheme is when the artwork is made from one color altered using tints and shades only.



Colors are also considered to be **cool and warm**. The color wheel below shows the natural division of the color wheel, however this isn't always accurate. Even though a blue may be considered a cool color, with the addition of red the blue may become a warm blue, or with the addition of green, become a cool blue.



There are **three properties** of color that can be defined and measured, they are;

Hue

Is the name of colour itself, it refers to the position of the colour in the spectrum



Value

Value refers to the lightness or darkness of a colour. We change colour value by adding black or white (tint or shade)

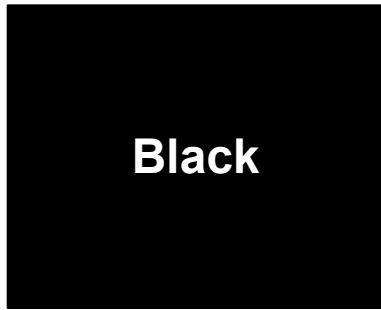


Intensity

Refers to the brightness of a colour, we can change this by adding black, white or the complimentary colour.



Black, White and Grey are called Neutral colors because they do not fit on the color wheel or in the color spectrum.



white

SPACE

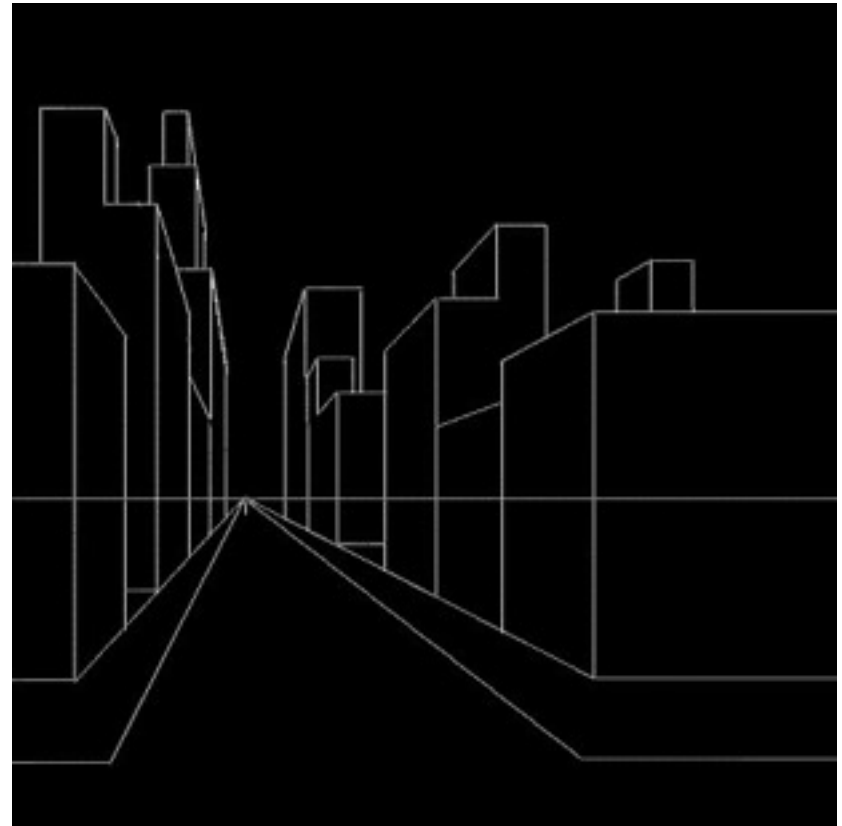
POSITIVE SPACE, NEGATIVE SPACE, PICTURE PLANE, COMPOSITION,
LINEAR PERSPECTIVE, ATMOSPHERIC PERSPECTIVE,
ABSTRACT, NON-REPRESENTATIONAL.

Space in Art refers to the three-dimensionality of sculpture and architecture. It also refers to the sense of depth in a two dimensional artwork.

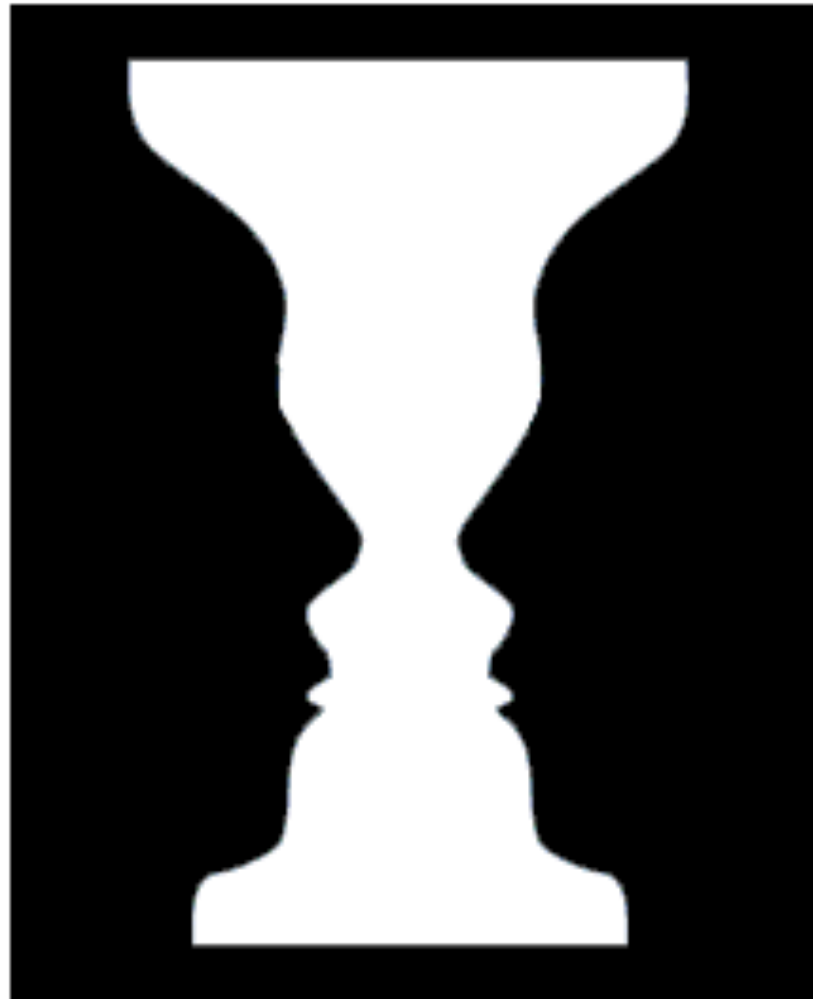
Three dimensional space (real)



Two dimensional space (illusion)



Positive space refers to the 3D object being viewed. **Negative space** refers to the space around the object. Positive and Negative space is only relevant for describing 3D form, for 2D artworks, then positive and negative shape is appropriate.



The picture plane

- The picture plane refers to the surface on which the artist works, whether it be on paper, a canvas or a wall.
- An artist may choose to create an illusion of depth by creating perspective, this draws the viewers eye “into” the artwork and beyond the picture plane.



Perspective is created by developing either atmospheric perspective or linear perspective. **Atmospheric perspective** is created by objects overlapping and getting smaller as they recede, colors fading and getting cooler into the distance. **Linear perspective** is created by the use of lines to create depth.

Atmospheric



Linear



TEXTURE

REAL TEXTURE, IMPLIED TEXTURE

Real Texture - when the texture can be felt and seen.



Implied texture – simulated or invented texture.



PART TWO
THE PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

PRINCIPLES

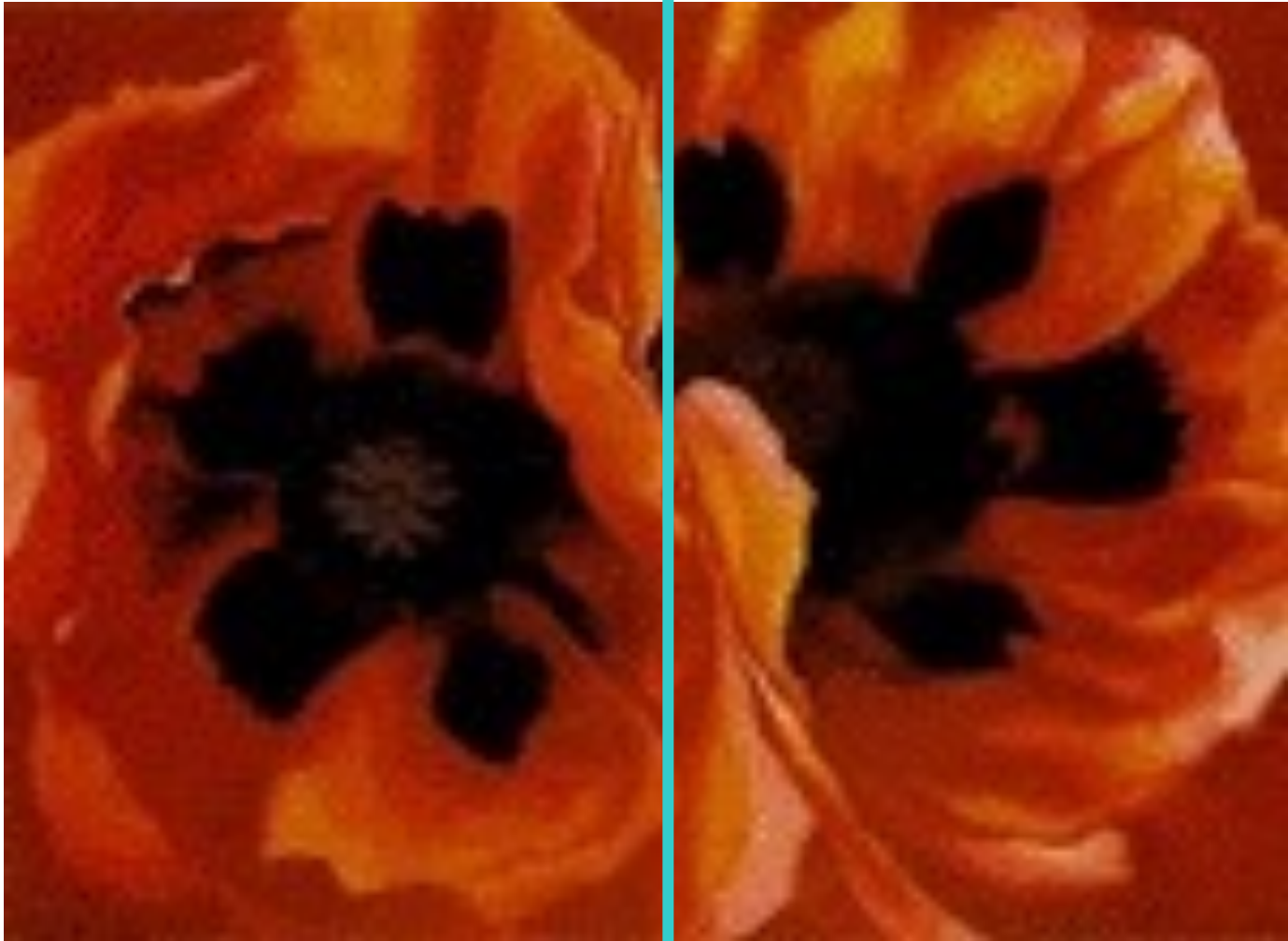
- BALANCE
- UNITY
- CONTRAST
- EMPHASIS
- PATTERN
- MOVEMENT AND RHYTHM

Visual **balance** is a way that different elements of a composition relate to one another. The elements of art – line, shape, texture etc – work together to create balance within a composition.

The four most important types of balance are

- 1.Symmetrical balance
- 2.Approximate symmetry
- 3.Asymmetrical balance
- 4.Radial balance

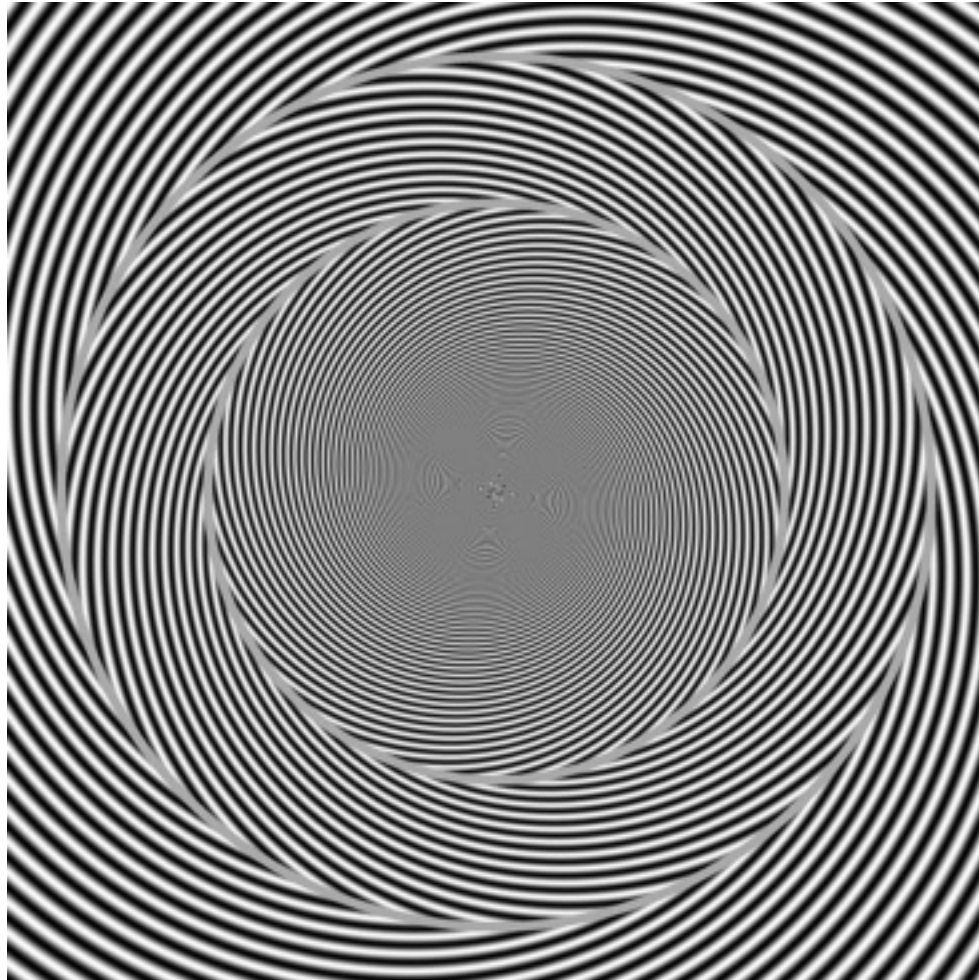
Symmetrical Balance- When a design displays symmetrical balance it is exactly the same on both sides. If you drew a line through the center of the design, one side would be the mirror image of the other. Symmetrical balance is sometimes known as bilateral, two-sided, or a formal balance.



Asymmetrical balance (also called informal balance) is more complex than symmetrical balance. It often contrasts elements that at first glance may not seem to be balanced. For example, an artist may place a large shape on one side of a design and a group of smaller shapes on the other. Or, he or she may balance a small area of color with a large, dull one. In of these examples, the two sides will appear to have the same “visual weight.”



If the parts of a design turn around a central point, the design has a **radial balance**. Design based on radial balance are somewhat similar to those that use symmetrical balance: they are generally orderly and repetitious, and one side may be much like the other.



Unity (also called Harmony) is achieved when the elements of an artwork work together as a whole. There are many ways of achieving unity in a painting. These include **repetition** and creating **dominance**. In the work below unity is achieved through repetition of shapes.



Unity is also achieved when a balance is established between a **dominant** object or figure and a lesser object or figure (also called a **subordinate**)



- In this painting **dominance** is obtained by the two girls on the left of the painting. This is achieved through their size (larger than the rest) and the use of bright colors (complimentary red and green. However the unity is achieved through the addition of the teacher in the center of the room. Imagine the painting without his presence, and without the two girls.

The purpose of **contrast** is to create a statement, to entice the viewer and to create attention.



- **Contrast through Line.** In this Margaret Preston Print, the fine lines of the tree branches contrast with the heavy shadows on the road.



- Contemporary art is known for its use of **contrasting materials**. In this work by Fiona Hall, the use of recycled PVC, beads, wire and glass helps establish meaning.



- The contrast between the organic **shape and size** of the reclining figure and the geometric tiles work together in this Henri Matisse print.



- In this photograph of Spanish Architect Antoni Gaudi's house, the contrast between the organic **form** of the walls of the building and the geometric, rigid panes of glass creates a unique architectural feature.



In this charcoal drawing, **contrasting value** helps to create an eerie setting, as well as focus the viewers eyes on the top of the staircase



In this Paul Gauguin painting, **color contrast** is established between the red hair of the subject and the cool green of the waves.

In this photograph of the Louvre in Paris, the architects of this new glass pyramid at the entrance have purposely established a **contrast in time and style**. This makes the visitors and viewers instantly recognize the visual differences between the architectural features of the past and the present.



Claus Oldenburg was one artist who used **contrasting ideas** in his work. By creating enormous sculptures of everyday, insignificant objects, Oldenburg has created a contrast in what the viewers expect and interpret art to be.



Emphasis is when one element is emphasized over another in an artwork. The emphasis can be on line, shape, texture etc



Pattern is the repetition of one or more elements. Patterns help create unity, add variety or create contrast

Pattern is used in Willie Cole's 'Pressed Iron Bud' and 'Domestic IV'. The works are made from repeated prints and burns from a domestic iron.



Movement and Rhythm is achieved in four ways

Visual rhythm

Kinetic art

Compositional movement

Progressive rhythm

Rhythm

Similar to rhythm in music and dance, visual Rhythm is closely related to movement. It may be produced by repeating one of several units of a design, such as a triangle shape or the color green.



In this work by Margaret Preston, Visual Rhythm is achieved by the repetition of the color red and the shape of the petals. The use of these elements lead the eye around the painting.

Kinetic Art

- Certain works of art, such as motorized sculptures, actually move or change over time. Art that includes actively moving parts is called ***kinetic art***.



This work is made to act similarly as a wind chime, moving with the elements.

Compositional Movement

- ***Compositional movement*** is neither action nor a record of action. It is experienced by comparing the positions of stationary objects or spaces within a design. In two dimensional art, the act of purposely leading the viewer to look at a focal point is called compositional movement.

In this painting the use of line and contrasting red and green palette lead the viewers eye to the house on the horizon, creating a compositional movement.



Progressive Rhythm

In art, **visual rhythm**, which is similar to pattern, may be produced by repeating one or more motifs in a recognizable or predictable order.

