

ELEMENTS OF ART

The foundation, framing, and nails of art.

Line

A line is a path of a point in space. A line can be two dimensional (pen/pencil line), or 3 Dimensional (wire, rope), or an implied line (the edge of a form). There are many different types of lines, which we define on another sheet.

Shape

A shape is a 2-dimensional (length x width) enclosed area. It can be divided into a few types: Rectilinear and curvilinear, and both of those sub-types can be classified as either geometric or organic.

Form

A form is a three-dimensional space (length, width, AND height). For example, a cube is a 3-dimensional *extrusion* of a square shape. A form encloses volume and posses mass.

Texture

The quality of the surface of an object. It can be completely visual, or tactile. It can be rough, smooth, patterned, etc....

Space

Space can be either real or implied. Actual space (real) is 3-dimensional that has volume and can be filled with an object or objects. In 2-dimensional artwork, artists can use a variety of techniques to create the illusion of space. One possible way of showing depth or space is *perspective*, could be the use of *shading*.

Color

This is the absorption and reflection of certain colors of light by an object. For instance, a red apple is red because it absorbs the other colors in white light, but reflects the red back to your eyes. We perceive colors in both the additive and subtractive spectrums, depending on the medium and dyes used to create the color. Color Theory is a huge issue to artists, especially those working in the world of graphics and computers.

Value

This is the relative lightness or darkness of an area or shape/form. Differing values help use create space/depth and form in a piece of art.

PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

The architecture of art: Built by the foundation, framing, and the nails.

Balance

This refers to the distribution of visual or actual “weight” in a work of art. Balance can be *either* symmetrical or asymmetrical, or radial. It is very important to recognize that a balanced piece of art is NOT necessarily symmetrical.

Emphasis

This is the dominant point of interest (also called the focal point) in a work of art. Color, value, and many other art elements are used to create emphasis.

Movement

This can also be called rhythm or pattern. It is the visual connect by the repetition of elements in a work of art. The use of these elements can lead the viewers’ eye through the piece. The concept of movement is recognized in three ways:

- Implied movement
- Sympathetic Movement
- Kinetic Movement

Contrast

This can also be called *variety*. This refers to the amount of the difference between certain elements within a work of art. It can be the change from black to white (value), or the difference between an organic form and a geometric form. This difference often times calls emphasis to a particular element.

Unity

This is one of the hardest Principles to understand and define. Basically Unity is how well the different elements are used in a work of art to create a cohesive whole. Note: It is VERY possible to have contrast and unity in the same project!