



Worksheet No. 8

Unit – I – (A)

Fundamentals of Visual Arts (Elements & Principles)

The Principles of Visual Art

The elements and principles of arts are the foundation of the language we use to talk about art. The **elements of art** are the visual tools that the artist uses to create a composition. These are line, shape, color, value, form, texture, and space.

The **principles of art** represent *how the artist uses the elements of art* to create an effect and to help convey the artist's intent. The principles of art and design are:

1. Balance
2. Unity
3. Harmony
4. Contrast
5. Rhythm
6. Emphasis
7. Movement
8. Proportion

The use of these principles can help determine whether a painting is successful and whether or not the painting is finished.

The artist decides what principles of art he or she wants to use in a painting. While an artist might not use all the principles of art in one piece, the principles are intertwined and the use of one will often depend on another. For example, when creating emphasis, the artist might also be using contrast or vice versa. It is generally agreed that a successful painting is **unified**, while also having some **unity/variety** created by areas of **contrast** and **emphasis**; is visually **balanced**; and **moves** the viewer's eye around the **composition**. Thus it is that one principle of art can influence the effect and impact of another.

Balance

Balance is the distribution of the visually interesting elements in an artwork. If all the visually interesting elements in an artwork are centered in one spot, the work is off-balance and the viewer's gaze will be stuck in one place, ignoring the rest of the work. Balance is an arrangement of lines, shapes, forms, shades, colours and texture in a way that the attention is drawn throughout the artwork. Some simple types of balance are symmetric and asymmetric.

Example art works for Balance



Some simple types of balance are symmetric and asymmetric.

Symmetric or formal Balance.

Symmetric balance is created by the equal division of shapes or components in a design or composition. This implies arranging shapes, colours and shades of equal size and weight on both the sides of the central line or point at equal distance.

Symmetric balance is also called formal balance, as it tends to lead to stable and orderly designs which are less dynamic.



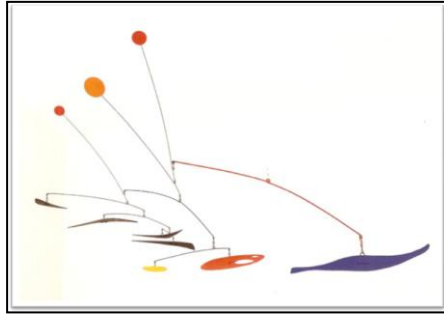
Symmetrical Balance in art

Asymmetric Balance

Asymmetric balance is a type of balance created by unlike things. One large common shape might be balanced by a small irregular one; a dominant element of dull colour can be balanced by a patch of something bright; a small area with lots of texture or detail might balance a larger smoother or less varied area etc.

Designs with Asymmetric balance

Painting with Asymmetric balance



Unity

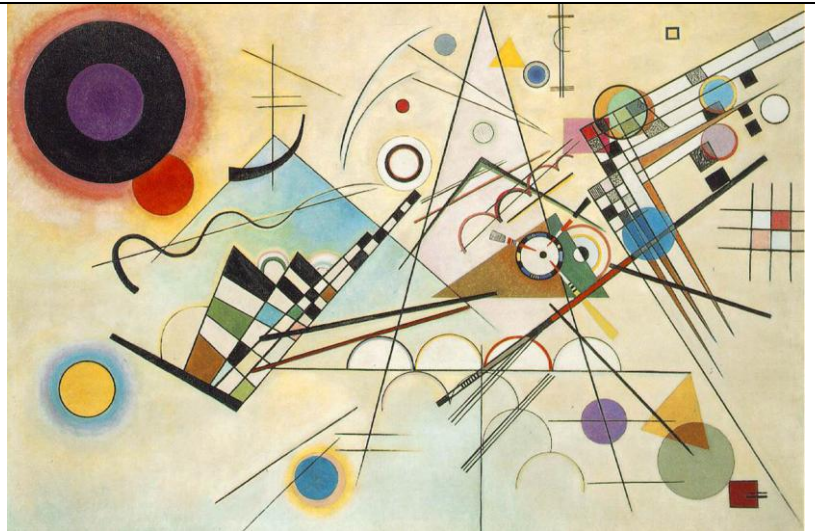
Unity is the quality of totality or oneness which is achieved by using harmonious elements which relate to each other and create a feeling of completeness. Unity is the unification of the different objects in a design. They are unified with a common bond or under a common purpose. Though each element has an independent identity but they are still united with the rest of the objects and give the feeling of completeness or oneness to the artwork.

Understanding that all the pieces of the work need to function in the same direction, many artists decide to restrict their colour choices, to rely on the use of the same, or use of overall texture and pattern in order to achieve harmony. The use of similar objects, common motif or background, focus on the same brushstroke, and inquiry into the concept of balance or symmetry are all understood as compositional tools.

Artists do not employ these tools within one strict method but rather in the chase for harmony we recognize certain trademarks of each individual style. To achieve unity in art, some prefer to use only primary colours, repeat geometric shapes on a neutral background, or use a variety of texture created with various lines.



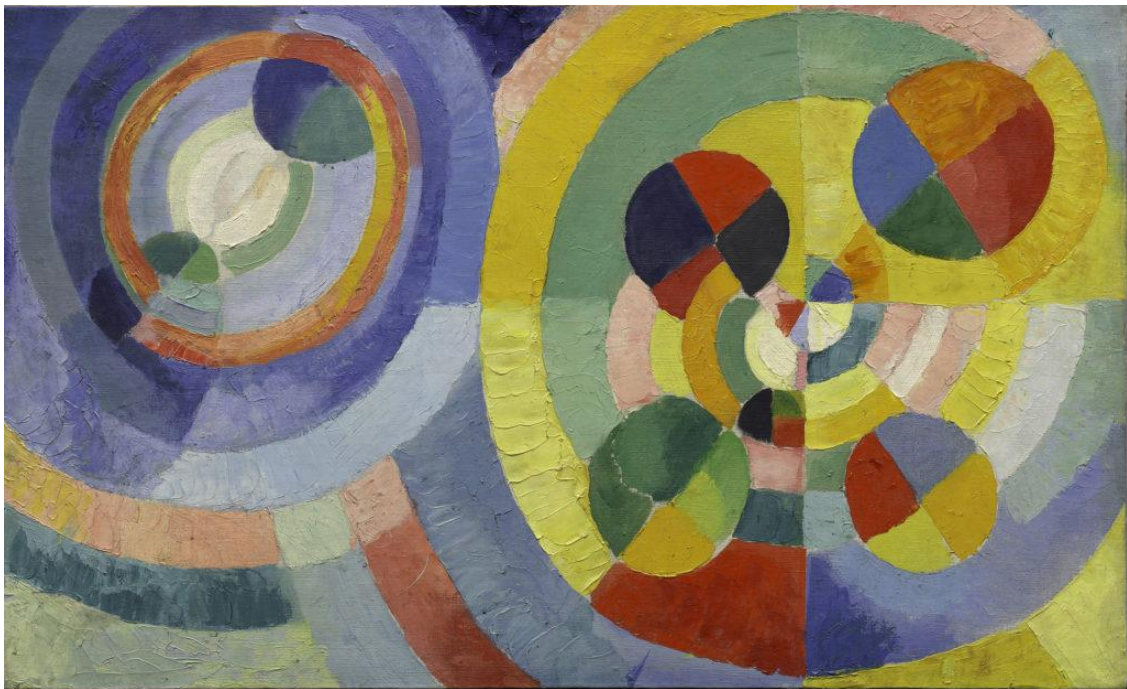
This painting demonstrates a strong sense of unity through the use of similar hues used throughout the painting. Even though there is a strong contrast between the light and dark areas, there is a sense of unity created through the use of similar hues (dark yellows, oranges and greens are used in the foreground and light yellows, oranges and greens are used in the background).



Example Paintings for Unity principle

Harmony

Harmony in art is the visually satisfying effect of combining similar and related elements to create a pleasing artwork for the eyes. Harmonious elements have a logical relationship – in some way they work together and complement each other. For example, the use of wavy lines and organic shapes in a composition adds harmony to it. If we introduce just one geometric shape, it disturbs the composition. Adjacent colours in the colour wheel, similar shapes etc. are other examples of harmonious elements.



Harmony in art overall is achieved when the elements of an artwork come together in a unified way. Certain element can be repeated, yet they still look and feel like they are lending themselves to a whole.



Contrast

Contrast is everything in art. Contrast is the difference in quality between two instances of an art element or using opposing qualities next to each other. Without it, artwork would be nothing but a blank surface.

Contrast can come in many forms:

Black and white is contrasting values. Organic/curvy and geometric/angular are contrasting shapes. Rough and smooth are contrasting textures.



Rhythm

This principle of art describes the movement in or of an artwork. Rhythm is usually achieved through repetition of lines, shapes, colours, and more. It creates a visual tempo in artworks and provides a path for the viewer's eye to follow.

Finding the Rhythm in Art

A pattern has rhythm, but not all rhythm is patterned. For example, the colours of a piece can convey rhythm, by making your eyes travel from one component to another. Lines can

produce a rhythm by implying movement. Forms, too, can cause rhythm by the ways in which they're placed one next to the other.

Some examples for Rhythm



Emphasis

Emphasis is a way of using elements to stress a certain area in an artwork. Emphasis is really just another way to describe a focal point in your artwork.

Why is Emphasis Important?

Emphasis is used in art to attract the viewer's attention to a particular area or object. This is typically the focal point or main subject of the artwork. For example, in a portrait painting, the artist usually wants you to see the person's face first. They will use techniques such as colour, contrast, and placement to make sure that this area is where your eye is attracted to first.

Any piece of art may have more than one area of emphasis. However, one typically dominates over all others. If two or more are given equal importance, your eye does not know how to interpret it. This confusion may lead you to not enjoy an otherwise good piece of work.

Examples



In this painting, there is strong emphasis on the moon through the use of colour contrast.



In this painting, the person who is in white colour dress



Movement

Visual movement is the principle of art used to create the impression of action in a work of art. Movement is the path our eyes follow when we look at a work of art, and it is generally very important to keep a viewer's eyes engaged in the work. Without movement, artwork becomes inactive. Movement can apply to a single component in a composition or to the whole composition at once. Visual movement is dependent on the other elements and principles of art. Rhythm, line, colour, balance and space are all examples of elements and principles of art that can play a major role in developing movement in a work of art.

Example of painting which demonstrate a great sense of movement



Proportion

Proportion is the comparison of dimensions or distribution of forms. It is the relationship in scale between one element and another, or between a whole object and one of its parts. Differing proportions within the composition can relate to different kinds of balance or symmetry and can help establish visual weight and depth.

When drawing or painting realistically, proportion is important. If the proportions are incorrect, then the resulting image will look less realistic or abstracted. Alternatively, artists can use proportion for effect. By manipulating proportion, the artist can make his/her subject seem strong, weak, funny, mysterious, etc. We can exaggerate proportions to emphasize a meaning or an element within the scene. For example, a caricature artist distorts proportion in order to create a stylized image of the subject.

Example Pictures

