The Principles of Design

Balance: Balance is the distribution of the visual weight of objects, colors, texture, and space. If the design was a scale, these elements should be balanced to make a design feel stable. In symmetrical balance, the elements used on one side of the design are similar to those on the other side; in asymmetrical balance, the sides are different but still look balanced. In radial balance, the elements are arranged around a central point and may be similar.



Contrast: Contrast is the difference in quality between two instances of an art element, or using opposing qualities next to each other. For example, black and white (contrasting values), organic/curvy and geometric/angular (contrasting lines/shapes/forms), and rough and smooth (contrasting textures).



Emphasis, Dominance & Focal Point: Emphasis is the part of the design that catches the viewer's attention. Usually the artist will make one area stand out by contrasting it with other areas. The area could be different in size, color, texture, shape, etc. Focal points are areas of interest the viewer's eyes skip to. The strongest focal point with the greatest visual weight is the Dominant element of the work.



Harmony & Unity: Harmony in visual design means all parts of the visual image relate to and complement each other. Harmonious elements work together to create a satisfying effect. Unity is created by arranging and aligning design elements in a harmonious enclosure.



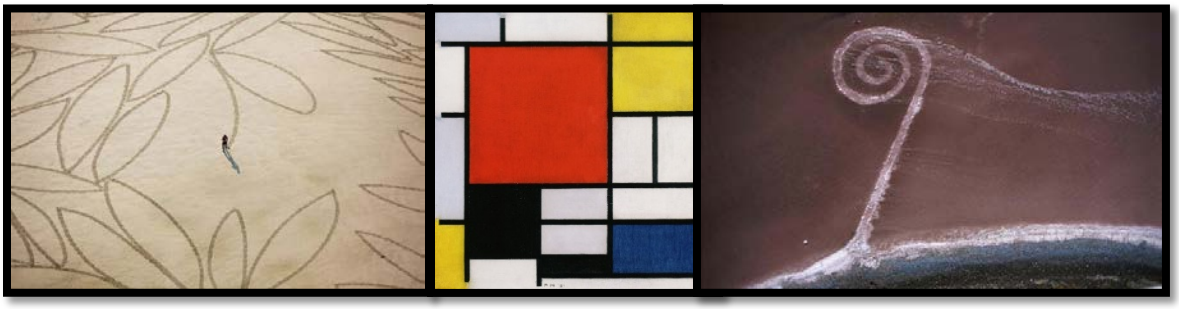
Movement: Movement is the path the viewer's eye takes through the work of art, and to show movement, action, and direction often to focal areas. Such movement can be directed along lines, edges, shape, and color within the work of art.



Repetition, Rhythm & Pattern: Repetition works with pattern to make the work of art seem active. The repetition of elements of design creates unity within the work of art. Rhythm is created when one or more elements of design are used repeatedly to create a feeling of organized movement. Pattern is the repeating of an object or symbol all over the work of art.



Proportion and Scale: Proportion is the feeling of unity created when all parts (sizes, amounts, or number) relate well with each other. When drawing the human figure, proportion can refer to the size of the head compared to the rest of the body. Scale is the size of something compared to the world in general. artwork can be miniature, small scale, full scale or life-size, large scale or larger than life, or monumental.



Variety and Variation: Variety is the use of several elements of design to hold the viewer's attention and to guide the viewer's eye through and around the work of art. Using a range of different qualities or instances of an art element to create a desired visual effect - e.g., a variety of shapes, colors, etc. Variation can add interest and break the boredom of simple repetitions.

